

Nevada State Board of NURSING NEWSLETTER

January 1999

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New! website address—
nursingboard.state.nv.us

Governor Names Perkins to Board

Perkins to serve remainder of Zamora's term

Gov. Bob Miller recently appointed Dorothy Perkins of Las Vegas to serve as the certified nursing assistant member of the Nevada State Board

Dorothy Perkins

of Nursing. She is fulfilling the remaining year of Eleanor Zamora's term. Zamora resigned after moving to California.

Perkins has worked as a nursing assistant for the Clark County Health District for almost a quarter of a century. "I love my work," she said. "I feel like I really make a difference, especially with the senior citizens I see in the foot clinic."

She also believes in volunteer service. Before this appointment, Perkins served on the board's CNA Advisory Committee for several years.

A resident of Las Vegas since 1972, Perkins has two sons, Preston, 26, and Wade, 21, and four grandchildren. (If you watched college football this fall, you might have seen Wade starting as cornerback for the Missouri Tigers.)

The seven-member board consists of four registered nurses, one practical nurse, one certified nursing assistant, and one consumer member. They are appointed by the governor to four-year voluntary terms.

Refresher Course Now In Nevada

First class offered at CCSN this fall

Up until this fall, if a registered nurse who hadn't practiced nursing in the last five years wanted to renew her license, she'd have to go

out of state to take the required refresher course. Now, thanks to a federal grant and the hard work of some dedicated people, registered nurses can take the course at the Community College of Southern Nevada. The first class will be finishing the course soon. Long-term plans call for making it available statewide.

To learn more about the refresher course for those who have not practiced nursing in the last five years, refer to the Nurse Practice Act (NAC 632.192) or call the Nevada State Board of Nursing in Las Vegas.

Donna Cowling, a CCSN nursing instructor and a member of the Board's Nursing Competency Advisory Committee, requested and received funding from the Schools-to-Careers program to develop the curriculum for the course. It consists of 10 units of theory (in defined modules) and 144 clinical hours.

"We've got six students enrolled in our first class," Cowling said. "Although I expect to find some wrinkles that need ironing out, I think they're finding the course challenging and worthwhile."

Elaine Young, director of staff development for the University Medical Center in Las Vegas and also a member of the Nursing Competency Advisory Committee, is conducting the preceptor training. "UMC sponsored training for all of our preceptors," she said. "We're also making it available as a continuing education course to other hospitals who want to train their preceptors."

To learn more about CCSN's refresher course, call (702) 651-5025. (Please note the CCSN refresher course is only for RNs.) To learn more about the preceptor training, call Elaine Young, RN, at (702) 383-2361.

BOARD MEMBERS

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Kathleen Reynolds, RN, BHS, ABQAURP
Vice President (Reno)

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(Las Vegas)

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NURSING NEWSLETTER

The Nevada State Board of Nursing Newsletter publishes news and information about Board actions, regulations, and activities.

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Apple Elected to National Board

Executive director one of nine national officers

During its annual meeting, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing elected Nevada's nursing board executive director as one of nine national officers.

Kathy Apple, MS, RN, will serve one year as director-at-large for the National Council, which has 61 member boards, including those from the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

Apple, who joined the Nevada State Board of Nursing in 1992 as associate executive director for nursing practice, has served as executive director since September 1996.

The role of both the National Council and the Nevada State Board of Nursing is promoting safe and effective nursing to protect public health, safety and welfare.

New CNA Renewal Requirement

How a regulation is changed

Beginning January 1, 1999, Certified Nursing Assistants who are renewing their certificates will have to prove they worked at least 400 hours as a CNA in the last two years. The old regulation required CNAs to work only eight hours in the two years between renewing their certificates.

We're often asked, "How does a regulation get changed?" and, "Do you ever ask people for their opinions?" The process for changing (or creating) a regulation is governed by state law and requires asking for and considering public input. The change in the CNA renewal requirement is a typical example of how that process works.

The CNA regulation change didn't happen overnight. It took almost two years. In August 1996, the Board's CNA Advisory Committee first discussed changing the original renewal requirement of eight hours of employment. The proposed change then went through a process which included further committee discussions,

formal Board reviews, public workshops and hearings, and Legislative Counsel Bureau reviews. Along the way, it was modified in response to concerns or suggestions.

In September 1998, the Board approved one final modification in response to concerns about how the new requirement might impact the availability of health care services in rural areas. It decided that, in counties* with populations of less than 10,000, CNAs who worked less than the required 400 hours may submit, as equivalent, additional hours of either inservice education or college credits earned while working toward a higher degree in health studies. (*Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander, Lincoln, Mineral, Pershing and Storey.)

For more information on the new CNA renewal requirement, please call the Las Vegas office. For more information on how a regulation gets changed, please call the Reno office.

If you'd like to get more involved in the regulation process, we encourage you to

attend the advisory committee meetings of the Board of Nursing (that's where discussions about new regulations begin, so attending committee meetings are the most effective way to give direct input into how you are regulated)

volunteer to serve on one of the Board of Nursing's advisory committees (openings are advertised in this newsletter and on the Board's web site)

attend the regular meetings and special public workshops held by the Board of Nursing (agendas and minutes are posted at community sites and listed in this newsletter and on the Board's web site)

COMPLETE CHILD SUPPORT SECTION

Federal law requires you to complete the child support section of the application, even if you don't have a child. Your application will be returned as incomplete unless you 1) check or answer one of the statements, 2) mark only one statement and, 3) sign and repeat your social security number in the child support section of the application.

Another Way to “Prove You’re Legal”

Form bridges gap between being legally renewed and receiving hard card license

During its June 1998 meeting, the Board of Nursing heard testimony about renewing nurses who “fall into the gap” between being legally renewed and receiving their hard card licenses.

In response, the Board is now offering a “Validation of Renewal” available in both the Las Vegas and Reno offices. Here’s how you get it:

- Submit to the Board your completed renewal form and fee. If you’re an RN or LPN and your application is stamped “C.E. Audit,” include copies of your continuing education certificates. If you’re a CNA, submit your continuing training (inservice) documentation and proof of 400 hours employment within the last two years.

- Confirm with Board staff that your license or certificate has been renewed (if application is complete, renewal will occur within 10 days following submittal).

- Walk in to the Las Vegas or Reno Board office and pay the \$25 validation fee.

- Staff will verify your license or certificate is legally renewed, then will give you the “Validation of Renewal” form.

- Present the renewal validation form to your employer as evidence you have renewed your license or certificate and are just waiting for the hard card to be mailed to you.

Bonus! The new validation form can be used for more than renewals. If you are newly licensed or certified, or have been endorsed from another state, and have not yet received your hard card, you may also request validation. Just walk in to either the Las Vegas or Reno office, confirm your license or certificate is active, and pay the \$25 validation fee. Board staff will give you the validation form to show to your employer as evidence you hold an active license or certificate and are just waiting for the hard card to be mailed to you.

Please call the Reno or Las Vegas office if you have any questions regarding validation.

New Executive Director at NCSBN

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing named Eloise Balasco Cathcart, MSN, RN, its executive director. Cathcart comes to NCSBN from the National League for Nursing, where she was the interim chief operating officer.

We Want You!

Two openings on Board’s advisory committees

There is currently an opening on the Board’s CNA Advisory Committee for a licensed practical nurse. There is one northern Nevada opening on the Board’s Disability Advisory Committee that can be filled by either a nurse or nursing assistant who has expertise in chemical dependency and/or mental health issues through personal experience or treatment of those disorders.

The CNA Advisory Committee is distinctive because its composition is defined by statute (NRS 632.072). Its membership also includes a representative of facilities for long-term care; a representative of medical facilities which provide acute care; a representative of agencies providing nursing in the home; one representative each from the health, welfare, and aging services divisions of Nevada’s department of human resources; a retired person, a certified nursing assistant, and a registered nurse. Its duty is to advise the Board on matters relating to certified nursing assistants.

To apply for the CNA Advisory Committee, call Patty O’Rourke-Langston in the Las Vegas office.

The Disability Advisory Committee evaluates nurses and CNAs regarding chemical dependency or mental disorders which may be impairing nursing practice, makes recommendations to the Board, and monitors recovery progress through scheduled interviews with the nurse or nursing assistant and regular reports from employers and treatment providers.

To apply for the Disability Advisory Committee, call Debra Scott in the Reno office.

COME TALK TO THE BOARD

On the last day of each regularly scheduled meeting of the Nevada State Board of Nursing (see page 6 for dates), Board members hold Open Forum for people to talk to them on nursing-related issues.

If you want to speak during Open Forum, please call Beverly Finley in the Reno office at least two weeks before the meeting for detailed information. Open Forum time is divided equally among those who wish to speak.

WE’LL COME TALK TO YOU

Board staff will come speak to your organization on a range of nursing-related topics, including delegation, the impaired nurse, licensure and discipline processes, and the Nurse Practice Act.

In the last three months, we’ve given more than 30 talks across the state, in locations ranging from schools to hospitals to correctional centers. Call the Reno office if you’re interested in having us come speak to your organization.

Disciplinary Actions

Before disciplinary action is taken, the Board ensures the nurse or nursing assistant is given due process

If the Nevada State Board of Nursing receives information that a nurse or nursing assistant may have broken the law (the Nevada Nurse Practice Act), the Board has the authority to investigate.

It will only investigate if the complaint is received in writing, names a nurse or nursing assistant who is licensed or certified in the state of Nevada, is signed by the person making the complaint, and alleges a violation of the Nurse Practice Act.

Before disciplinary action is taken, the Board ensures the nurse or nursing assistant is given due process, which requires giving adequate notice and description of the charges, and a hearing or the opportunity for a hearing.

The individual also has the right to a formal hearing, the right to an attorney, the right to not participate in an informal hearing, the right to not sign anything, the right to see the complaint, and the right to appeal.

If the evidence doesn't support the allegations, the complaint may be dismissed or closed. If the evidence does support the allegations, the Board can take disciplinary action against the individual.

Disciplinary action can include denial, reprimand, fine, suspension, probation, or revocation of a license or certificate. The Board considers each case individually.

The disciplinary penalty is determined based on a number of factors which include the severity and recency of the offense, degree of deviation from standard practice, evidence of rehabilitation, current ability to practice safely, mitigating factors, and past disciplinary history.

The law gives the Board nondisciplinary options, including a very successful program which allows qualified, chemically dependent nurses and nursing assistants to re-enter the workforce in a paced sequence. It also monitors their recovery to ensure the safety of patients.

The following are disciplinary actions taken by the Board for the period of March 7 to June 5, 1998.

Baumgartner, Mary, LPN2129
Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient.

Bear, LanaMarie, CNA6260
Voluntary Surrender of Certificate based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct.

Bell, Tatum, CNA11028
Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application, (2) conviction, and (5) dangerous drugs.

Blancett, Edward, CNA6776
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (19) falsification of medical records.

Byrne, Susanne, RN7338
Agreement for Probation (disciplinary) based on NAC 632.890 (26) customary standards.

Cross, Colleen, CNA1271
Agreement for Suspension based on NAC 632.890 (19) inaccurate recording.

Crowe, Carolyn, RN17591
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of Board Order.

Eassa, Joseph, CNA8582
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient.

Gordon, Whitney, RN26638
Renewal Agreement for Probation (disciplinary) based on NRS 632.320 (5) controlled substance.

Grevich, Carol, RN12679
Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (26) customary standards.

Hawkins, Lori, CNA8348
Public Reprimand based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of Board Order.

Heinzen, Diana, RN applicant
Application for licensure denied based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application.

Hendershot, Regina, RN19389
Agreement for Probation (disciplinary) based on NAC 632.890 (15) failing to document properly the administration of a controlled substance.

Holland, Elizabeth, RN29561
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (27) failing to take appropriate actions.

Hughes, Kathleen, RN16912
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of Board Order.

Jenison, Kathleen, RN27342
Agreement for Probation (disciplinary) based on NAC 632.890 (26) customary standards.

Johnson, Maribess, RN13671
Agreement for Reprimand and Fine in the amount of \$750.00 based on NAC 632.890 (29)(b) failing as a chief nurse to institute standards of competent organizational management and management of human resources so that safe and effective nursing care is provided to patients.

McLellan, Mark, CNA applicant
Application denied based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application.

Meyer, Lucinda, CNA6864
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct.

Morris, Marvella, RN26406, LPN6963

Agreement for Suspension for six months, Probation (disciplinary) and Fine in the amount of \$1000.00 based on NAC 632.890 (19) inaccurate recording, falsifying or otherwise altering or destroying records and (22) exploiting a patient for financial gain or offering, giving, soliciting or receiving fees or gifts for the referral of a patient.

Pasion, Emedita, CNA10126
Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient.

Proulx, Paula, RN18221
Public Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (31) endangering the safety of a coworker

by carrying out an act of violence.

Rania, Della, LPN6047
Agreement for Probation (disciplinary) based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct.

Rice, Greg, RN30022
Voluntary Surrender of License in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action accepted based on NRS 632.320 (5) controlled substance and NAC 632.890 (17) diversion.

Rokosz-Darden, Christime, RN25649

Agreement for Fine in the amount of \$100.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license.

Schehl, Donna, RN Applicant
Application for Licensure denied based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application.

Silliman, Helen, RN30294
Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (21) patient abandonment.

Smith, Michelle, CNA Applicant
Staff denial of application for certification based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application.

Smith, Beverlee, RN4944
Voluntary Surrender of License in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (26) customary standards.

Trescartes, Leland, RN10550
Revocation of License based on two counts of NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct. Respondent may not apply for reinstatement for a period of three (3) years.

Warner, Sharon, LPN10270
Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (21) patient abandonment.

Alsop, Gina, CNA 3930
Renewal Application denied

The following are disciplinary actions taken by the Board for the period of June 5 through September 18, 1998.

based on NAC 632.320 (1) fraudulent application.

Baltazar, Willermo,

<p>CNA10598 Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action accepted based on NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Bergstrom, Jerry, LPN10529 Voluntary Surrender of License in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (2) conviction related to nursing (7) unprofessional conduct (g) conviction of the use or unlawful possession of a controlled substance or dangerous drug and NAC 632.890 (17) diversion of narcotics. Blackburn, Linda, CNA9131 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (21) patient abandonment. Bosworth, Marsha, CNA10261 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient. Brownstein, Meredith, RN25162 Found guilty on the basis of the Stipulation of Facts and Liabilities (NRS 632.320 (14) violation of a board order). Respondent's license revoked; respondent may not apply for reinstatement for a period of one year. Criteria to be considered prior to reinstatement is an evaluation by the Disability Advisory Committee. Brunswick, Barbara, RN24030 Found guilty on the basis of the Stipulation of Facts and Liabilities: NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Board ordered Respondent's license be placed on a three-year Disciplinary Probation. Cale, Benjamin, RN 27151 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (19) falsifying records. Cline, Cheryl, RN 29781 Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of a Board order. Davis, Barbara, CNA5939 Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of a Board order. Elliott, Kim, CNA9477 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate</p>	<p>in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (31) endangering the safety of a coworker by making implied threats of violence and (32) abuse or neglect of a patient. Emerson, Gary, CNA11506 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient. Estoque, Fe, CNA applicant Application denied based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct and NAC 632.890 (27) causing patient physical harm by taking direct or indirect actions. Farina, Laurie, LPN T-06497 Agreement for Fine in the Amount of \$100.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license. Figueredo, Susan, RN23471 Agreement for Probation (Disciplinary) based on NAC 632.890 (2) practicing beyond scope. Frank, Marcelene, CNA applicant Application denied based on NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Glynn, Gayle, RN29558 Voluntary Surrender of License in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action accepted based on NAC 632.890 (17) drug diversion. Hamu, Diane, LPN9721 Agreement for Reprimand based on NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application. Hart, Danette, RN29674 Agreement for Reprimand and classes accepted based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct. Harvey, Kimberly, CNA applicant Application accepted with a Board ordered three-year disciplinary probation based on NRS 632.320 (2) criminal convictions (felonies). Hays, Margaret, CNA0427 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient. Henderson, Marilyn, RN263371 Agreement for Probation</p>	<p>(Disciplinary) accepted based on NRS 632.320 (14) violation of Board order. Hornbuckle, Gwynne, RN16033 Agreement for Probation (Disciplinary) accepted based on NAC 632.890 (10) practicing nursing while any amount of alcohol is present in the body. Idlebergh, Shannon, CNA10271 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse or neglect of a patient. Jensen, Linda, LPN 6954 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (27) causing a patient physical, mental or emotional harm by taking direct or indirect actions or failing to take appropriate actions. Keroles, Joseph, CNA3516 Renewal Application denied based on NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Lanzaro, Elizabeth, RN8496 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (19) inaccurate recording. Lee, Laura, CNA applicant Agreement for Probation (Disciplinary) based on NRS 632.320 (2) criminal convictions. Lewis, Luann, CNA11095 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NRS 632.320 (6) is mentally incompetent and (1) fraudulent application. McNeely, Denise, RN21628 Agreement for Probation (Disciplinary) accepted based on NAC 632.890 (9) impairment. Meich, Angelia, CNA100074 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (26) customary standard, (24) failing to observe signs and symptoms of a patient and report changes, (32) abuse and neglect of patient. Mendenhall, G. Ruth, CNA8375 Voluntary Surrender of Certificate in Lieu of Other Disciplinary</p>	<p>ary Action based on NAC 632.890 (32) abuse and neglect of a patient. Moore, Patricia, LPN3396 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (2) performing acts beyond the scope of practice of nursing. Moretti, Maryann, RN29249 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (2) performing acts beyond the scope of the practice of nursing. Muse, Linda Marie, RN Applicant Application accepted with a three-year disciplinary probation based on NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Mutua, Agatha, CNA8632 Agreement for Reprimand and Fine in the amount of \$500.00 based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct. Nelson, Veronica, CNA2422 Found guilty based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct, Respondent's certificate is revoked; Respondent may not apply for reinstatement for a period of one year. In applying for reinstatement the Board may consider the following criteria: completion of a course on managing anger and a course on legal ethics. O'Neill, Christina, LPN9897 Agreement for Reprimand and Fine in the amount of \$200.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license. Pena, Alejandro, CNA11202 Agreement for Fine in the amount of \$50.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a certificate. Pischel, Robin, RN applicant Application denied based on NRS 632.320 (2) convictions. Quinones, Frank, RN27031 Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action accepted based on NRS 632.320 (14) Violation of a Board Order. Robison, Judith, LPN4875 Agreement for Reprimand and classes accepted based on NRS 632.320 (7) unprofessional conduct. Rosenberger, Donna, N26788 Voluntary Surrender of License</p>	<p>in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (17) drug diversion. Singson, Marie, LPN8260 Agreement for Fine of \$500.00 and Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license. Smith, Jennifer, RN29112 Agreement for Fine in the amount of \$100.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license. Smith, Roseann, LPN9448 found guilty based on NRS 632.320 (14) Violation of a Board Order. Respondent's license is revoked; respondent may not apply for reinstatement for a period of one year. Respondent is fined in the amount of \$100.00. In applying for reinstatement, the Board may consider the following criteria: respondent must complete a course in legal ethics which is not a correspondence course and must pay her fine in full. Starkey, Brian, CNA 9775 Voluntary Surrender in Lieu of other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.320 (32) abuse of a patient. Stitt, Linda, RN T-256097 Agreement for Reprimand and Fine in the amount of \$200.00 based on NAC 632.890 (35) practicing without a license. Vogel, Rebecca, RN8570 Voluntary Surrender of License in Lieu of Other Disciplinary Action based on NAC 632.890 (17) drug diversion. Walker, Annette, CNA2795 Agreement for Reprimand based on NAC 632.890 (19) falsifying medical records.</p>
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Questions? Call
Debra Scott, Associate Executive
Director for Nursing Practice, in
Reno.

For information
about filing a complaint, go to <http://nursingboard.state.nv.us/consinfo/>

BOARD MEETINGS

A seven-member board appointed by the governor, the Nevada State Board of Nursing consists of four registered nurses, one practical nurse, one certified nursing assistant and one consumer member. Its meetings are open to the public; agendas are posted on the Board's web site and at community sites.

To be more responsive to the needs of nurses, Board voted last month to hold two-day meetings every two months instead of meeting three-and-a-half days every quarter. This change, which will also save travel and other meeting expenses, will take effect in May 1999.

1999 Meeting Dates

March 3-5
Las Vegas

May 13-14
Reno

July 14-16 (retreat)
Minden/Gardnerville

September 16-17
Las Vegas

November 18-19
Reno

Case Study: Continuing Education

by Debra Scott, MS, RN, Associate Executive
Director for Nursing Practice

What happens if you're audited?
Why good records are important.
Why a renewal might be denied.

This ongoing series uses real-life examples to help nurses and nursing assistants better understand the regulations and laws that govern them.

The Process

Renewal application.

If you're authorized to practice nursing in Nevada, a renewal application will be mailed to you two months before your license or certificate is due to expire. Board staff mail the application to the address of record, so it's very important to inform them, in writing, whenever you change addresses.

Continuing education audit.

About 10 percent of the renewal applications are stamped with "C.E. AUDIT" in red on the front of the application next to the questions in Section I. Section I asks you to mark one of these statements:

1. I certify that I have completed 30 hours of continuing education related to nursing in the previous 24 months.
2. I understand that copies of certificates must be submitted with my renewal if I have been selected for audit.

If "C.E. AUDIT" appears next to the questions, you must mark question #2 and include copies of your continuing education certificates with your renewal application. If you don't send those copies with your application, you'll be sent a notice of incomplete application. This will delay your renewal, because Board staff cannot process your application until they receive your certificates and any other information needed to complete your application.

Questionable credits.

When the Board's staff receive your certificates, they check to make sure they're from approved providers, they represent 30 credits, and they haven't been altered or falsified. Recently, the Board investi-

gated several incidents of questionable continuing education certificates submitted with nurses' or nursing assistants' renewal applications. Here are two actual cases taken from the files of the Nevada State Board of Nursing. (The names have been changed.)

Case Study #1

False statements about credits resulting in license expiration and Board reprimand

Four days before her license expired, Ms. Anderson submitted her application for renewal without documentation of continuing education. Her application had been marked "C.E. Audit." Her incomplete application was returned to her, and in the meantime, her license expired. She again submitted her renewal application, and since her license had expired, she had to pay the \$100 reinstatement fee in addition to the renewal fee. The date on her certificate indicated she had taken a 30-hour correspondence course **after** her renewal application had been returned to her. This meant when she first submitted the application, she hadn't taken the 30 continuing education hours in the required time frame. Board staff began a complaint investigation alleging that Ms. Anderson had lied on her renewal application. The Board heard Ms. Anderson's case and found her guilty of violating NRS 632.320 (1) fraudulent application, and disciplined her license by reprimanding her for failing to answer the questions on her application truthfully. As the Board does when it takes any disciplinary action, it reported the reprimand to the national data bank and listed it on the disciplinary actions list sent to all medical providers in Nevada.

Case Study #2

Altering continuing education certificates resulting in denied application

Ms. Brown submitted her continuing education certificates with her renewal application. The names and hours appeared to have been altered on all of the certificates. When Board staff contacted the facility and the correspondence course provider, they were informed that Ms. Brown had never

been an employee of the facility, nor had she ever taken classes from the provider. Although she was asked to respond, she never responded to the allegation. Although Ms. Brown was given notice that her application would be considered by the Board at a formal meeting, she did not show up at the meeting. The Board denied her application.

So What's The Point?

By completing your renewal application, you are certifying that you have read the application and that your statements are true and correct. Falsifying your application is grounds for discipline. If you don't submit your certificates when your application is audited, or if you submit altered documents, the Board will open a complaint to investigate a potentially fraudulent application. So please remember to complete your continuing education courses on time, keep your certificates in a safe place, and if your application is stamped "C.E. AUDIT," make sure you submit copies of your certificates with your renewal.

Questions? Concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns about the renewal process and/or continuing education requirement, please call our Las Vegas office.

Pew Commission Calls for Tougher Standards

New report recommends major changes in how health professions are regulated

The Pew Health Professions Commission, led by former Sen. George Mitchell, announced the release of its new report by "urging Congress and states to adopt tougher standards to regulate the health care workforce."

The report, released in October, *Strengthening Consumer Protection: Priorities for Health Care Workforce Regulation*, builds upon a set of recommendations issued by the commission in 1995.

It asks policymakers to focus on three

INACTIVE STATUS

Now there's an easier way to place yourself on inactive status

The renewal form has been revised to include a statement in Section I, "I wish to go to the inactive status." If you want to place your license on inactive status, just fill in the "yes" bubble, sign and date the renewal form, and return it to the Las Vegas office. Since by law, you must advise the Board in writing when you place your license on inactive status, this gives you a convenient way to do it. If you have any questions regarding this free service, please call the Las Vegas office.

broad areas for improving how health care professionals are regulated: health professions boards and governance structures, scopes of practice authority, and continuing competence.

Specifically, the commission is recommending that all health care professionals be required to meet specific competency requirements throughout their careers; that individual health professional boards increase representation of public, nonprofessional members to at least one-third; and that states implement nationally uniform scopes of practice for all the professions.

"I think as health professionals, all nurses agree that consumer protection is our highest priority," said Kathy Apple, Executive Director of the Nevada State Board of Nursing. "The question is how to go about it. The Board is interested in what nurses think."

Administered by the Center for the Health Professions at the University of California, the Commission is funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. For more information on the commission and its recent report, visit its website <http://futurehealth.ucsf.edu>, call 415-476-8181, or write 3333 California Street, Suite 410, San Francisco, CA 94118.

What do you think about the recommendations in the Pew report? Call Kathy Apple in the Reno office and let her know.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Nevada State Board of Nursing is advised by and appoints members to seven standing advisory committees. Committee meetings are open to the public; agendas are posted on the Board's web site and at community sites.

Advanced Practice Advisory Committee
January 4, 1999

CNA Advisory Committee
January 27, 1999
April 21, 1999
July 28, 1999
October 27, 1999

Nursing Competence Advisory Committee
January 20, 1999
April 14, 1999
July 14, 1999
October 20, 1999

Nursing Practice Advisory Committee
January 20, 1999

NEW NURSE PRACTICE ACTS
The new, up-to-date Nevada Nurse Practice Acts are now available. They're just \$5 a copy if you buy them at the Reno or Las Vegas office, and \$8 by mail (make check or money order payable to the Nevada State Board of Nursing).

Contact

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December Meeting Highlights

Endorsement of Action Plan on Domestic Violence

The Board voted to encourage nurses to include domestic violence screen questions in the process of assessment. They also voted to support the enhancement of nursing school curriculum on domestic violence.

Both actions resulted from the Board's review and discussion of the October 1998 *State Policy Action Plan on Domestic Violence*. The Board commended the office of Nevada Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa and the Nevada Health Initiative on Domestic Violence for developing the plan and related report. It also acknowledged the participation and expertise of Jeri Dermanelian, RN and Elena Lopez-Bowlan, RN, APN as members of the initiative.

Revision of APN Protocol Guidelines

The Board approved the guidelines for protocols for APNs as recently revised by its Advanced Practice Advisory Committee.

Protocols are written directions for assessment and management of specified medical conditions that an APN and a collaborating physician have agreed upon as a basis for their practice. They may be disease-oriented, procedure-oriented and/or process-oriented. Call the Reno or Las Vegas office for a copy of the revised guidelines.

NEW TOLL-FREE CONSUMER HOT LINE 800-746-3980

or in the Reno calling area, 688-2620

This September, the Board of Nursing opened a hot line to help consumers who have questions or concerns about the nursing care they or their loved ones are receiving.

Please encourage your friends, families and patients to call the hot line if they have concerns about nursing care. And remember, if you or anyone else wishes to file a complaint against a nursing assistant or nurse, it must be done in writing. Complaint forms can be requested by calling the hot line.

A "New" Location for Las Vegas Office

A location change in March makes it easier for you to visit our Las Vegas office, which handles licensure, certification and education. We're now located at 4330 South Valley View, Suite 106, in the Valley View Pointe complex. We're about two blocks south of the intersection of Valley View and Flamingo (Rio Hotel intersection). If you're traveling on I-15, take the Flamingo West exit, turn left on Valley View, and look for us on the left-hand side of the street. If you'd like more directions, we'll be happy to give them to you. Just call 486-5800!

NURSING NEWSLETTER

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